

John Falls Walker House
344 East Bay Street
Charleston
Charleston County
South Carolina

HABS No. SC-262

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

JOHN FALLS WALKER HOUSE

Street Address: 344 East Bay Street, Charleston, Charleston County,
South Carolina

Present Owner: Mrs. Seline L. Rosen, 344 East Bay Street
Charleston, South Carolina

Brief Statement
of Significance: This house was probably built soon after 1832,
with an addition dating before 1849; it maintains
little changed interiors.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: John Falls Walker, probably original owner. In 1832, he bought the lot on which the original (south) part of the house stands, and died in or by 1849, possessed of the land on which both parts stand /Charleston County Mesne Conveyance, C-10, 177; D-12, 526/. The original part of the house stands on what was Lot #61 of the Gadsden lands, which lot was bought at auction in 1806 by Abraham Isaacks, Jr. (B-9, 84). He sold it to Captain James Cooper in 1810 (C-8, 1). Cooper's heirs sold it to John Falls Walker in 1832 (C-10, 177). Walker's heirs sold the property, enlarged on the north (where the addition stands) to Isaac A. Cardoza, trustee, in 1849 (D-12, 526). Subsequent owners were Charles H. Panknin, Jacob Belitzer, trustee, Gertrude Belitzer (C-23, 519) and Mrs. Seline L. Rosen, present owner.
2. Date of erection: Probably soon after 1832, when lot was bought by John Falls Walker (C-10, 177).
3. Architect, builder, suppliers, etc.: Unknown.
4. Notes on alterations and additions: The northern part of the house is an addition to the southern (main block). Walker would seem to have built both the main house and the addition, before 1849, when his heirs sold the house (D-12, 526).

Prepared by Beatrice St. J. Ravensel
Architectural Historian
August 1958 - Charleston, S.C.

NOTE: This house was demolished in 1963.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statament

1. Architectural character: A mid-nineteenth-century town house with only slightly changed interiors.
2. Condition of fabric: Good. Now threatened with demolition.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: About 42' x 54', exclusive of piazza and small rear wing. Faces west to the street.
2. Foundations: Brick.
3. Wall construction: Stucco on brick; reinforcing ties have been installed, presumably after earthquake of 1886.
4. Porch: There is a two-story wood Charleston piazza along the south side, with unfluted Doric columns and orthodox entablatures, the upper one having modillions. Railings have turned balusters. The appearance of the south facade indicates that the piazza may have had a third story originally.
5. Chimneys: Two brick chimneys on central wall and two on north wall, located to center on rooms.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Main entrance on center, west wall of the north wing, is set in deeply recessed elliptical arch, and is approached by seven stone steps. It has fluted Ionic pilasters, side lights and low fan light. There is a central door on each of the three stories, at the south, with side lights.
 - b. Windows and shutters: On the main or south wing, there are two bays on each side of the central doorway, on the south wall; on the west wall there are three bays, with stucco lintels. Windows have louvred shutters (except under shelter of piazza) with strap hinges and pintles. On the north wing there is a triple window over the entrance archway. Along the north side are stair-landing windows, with two bays on each side.
7. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: The south wing has a hip roof with standing-seam sheet-metal covering. The north wing

has a gable roof of low pitch.

- b. Cornice: The south wing has a small stucco cornice, with sheet-metal gutters. The north wing has a larger stucco cornice and frieze above second story, with parapets above it on east and west ends.

C. Technical Description of Interiors:

1. Floor plans: The main or south wing has a central hall with a room on each side. The north wing has a large stair hall at the west and a room at the east. There is a small rear wing at the east end of the main wing. A piazza extends along the south side.
2. Stairways: The stairway has an open well, open string, rounded handrail with spiral at newel, three turned balusters to each tread, and scrolled brackets under the projecting treads. The upper portion of the stair is curved, making a right-angle turn. The outer string is self-supporting. The plaster soffit merges with the ceiling.
3. Flooring: Pine boards about 5 inches wide.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Typically plaster, with plaster cornices and ornamental ceiling rosettes in some rooms.
5. Trim: Door and window casings have a panel, corner blocks and plinth. Window casings extend to floor, with panel below the stool. Wainscot in drawing room has narrow moldings above plain baseboard, and fluted dado rail.
6. Lighting: In the entrance hall is a combination gas and electric light fixture which appears to date from the late nineteenth century.
7. Heating: Fireplaces--The drawing room mantel is of black marble, with antae, plain lintel, and simple shelf.

D. Site:

1. Orientation and general setting: The house fronts west on a street, originally residential, which in recent years has become commercial and industrial. Many old houses in this neighborhood have been demolished in recent years.
2. Outbuildings: At the east a short distance behind the house is a two-story service building of five bays. Openings have low segmental arches; the north wall is without openings. There are two large chimneys.